



## Letter from Svante Arrhenius to Georg Bredig, April 1901

Arrhenius, Svante. "Letter from Svante Arrhenius to Georg Bredig, April 1901," April 1, 1901. Papers of Georg and Max Bredig, Box 1, Folder 4. Science History Institute. Philadelphia. <https://digital.sciencehistory.org/works/4jen9pd>.

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Translated by Jocelyn R. McDaniel

### English Translation

#### Image 1

Stockholm, 7 April 1901

My dear friend Bredig,

Thank you very much for your last letter. I now correspond with so few colleagues that everything I hear from you is news and therefore even more valuable.

As for my dispute with Widder, the old man has been angry for a long time because inorganic chemistry is viewed by many as a subdivision of physical chemistry. I can understand his bitterness. The research methods that he has long used and valued are now being ignored. However, it would be wrong to blame Küster and Lorenz for this. He only chose them because he thinks he can intimidate them with his authority.

#### Image 2

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That won't help him much. He should retire, although he still does a good job of keeping Filtica and the other overly confident colleagues in their place.

I am very sorry that you do not feel completely at home in Leipzig. Ostwald is now sick, and all the young people are fighting for the first available position. It's a shame that Ostwald has stepped down. Nernst will always play first fiddle and he will train people in a very biased manner.

Nernst and I are now in the middle of a disagreement, which I hope will end soon. N. is obviously very nervous, which I understand very well. The "lamp" story is continually brought up and probably spoils his mood. I will probably write him soon to clear the air.

What a shame that you can't go to Zurich!

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Lorenz is viewed there like a French prince. Moreover, if he understands the matter so well, you could certainly deal with it without complications. Nevertheless, it's good that you completed your postdoctoral teaching qualifications. Congratulations as well on your postdoctoral thesis!

I am now working on my book on cosmic physics and it is progressing very slowly. In June, I will visit Copenhagen for 6 weeks to work on the serum topic, which seems closely related to physical chemistry. Perhaps I'll discover something of significance or perhaps nothing at all.

Say hello to your wife and best regards to you and everyone in the laboratory. I can't come to Freiburg.

Your old friend,  
Svante Arrhenius